



2008 GOP NATIONAL CONVENTION: AT A GLANCE

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GOP officials picked the Twin Cities for their 2008 Republican National Convention over New York, Cleveland and Tampa-St. Petersburg, Fla. Some highlights from previous conventions:

MINNESOTA'S ONLY PREVIOUS CONVENTION

The 1892 Republican National Convention brought 2,000 delegates to Minneapolis. The GOP backed President Benjamin Harrison in his unsuccessful re-election bid. The convention was held in the 6-year-old Industrial Exposition Building, which stood on the east bank of the Mississippi River until its 1940 demolition. High-rise condos stand on the site today.

RECENT GOP CONVENTIONS

2004: New York

2000: Philadelphia

1996: San Diego

1992: Houston

1988: New Orleans

NEW YORK 2004 GOP CONVENTION

Cost: More than \$154 million. New York spent \$58 million on police and services. \$50 million was reimbursed by the federal government. \$15 million in federal money went to the Republican Party to pay for the convention staff salaries and expenses, such as \$207,000 spent on the balloons that dropped from the ceiling after President Bush's nomination acceptance speech.

Delegates: The 2004 GOP convention in New York had 4,853; about half were alternates

-- 44 percent were women

-- 6 percent were Hispanic

-- 6 percent were African-American

-- 2 percent were Asian-American

-- 5 percent were under 30

Traffic impact: Police closed 13 blocks of Seventh Avenue along one side of Madison Square Garden and 11 blocks of Eighth Avenue on the other side

Arrests: Police say they arrested 1,821 people, the most at any U.S. political convention

-Sources: Pioneer Press archives; New York Times; Xcel Energy Center, Associated Press

VOICES

R.T. Rybak, Democratic mayor of Minneapolis: "I like to party whether it's a Republican or Democratic one, and we're going to have a good one right here."

Chris Coleman, Democratic mayor of St. Paul: "This is about civic building. This is not about politics."

U.S. Sen. Norm Coleman, a Republican and former St. Paul mayor: "One of the things that we said when he made the pitch is, you've got Minnesota, Wisconsin and Iowa as battleground states -- the heartland of America. Whoever wins those states is going to be the next president of the United States."

Tom Horner, GOP political consultant in Minneapolis: "It's a huge coup for Republicans throughout the Upper Midwest."

Larry Dowell, head of the St. Paul Area Chamber of Commerce: "We're going to roll out the red carpet here. I'd say it's a crown gem for St. Paul. I don't think there's any convention that is more prized than a political convention."

Charlie Weaver, head of the Minnesota Business Partnership and former chief of staff for Republican Gov. Tim Pawlenty: "This is bigger than anything other than maybe an Olympics. It's the only thing that captures the attention of the nation for four to five consecutive nights prime time."

-- Associated Press

WHAT'S NEXT

The existing bid committee, headed by publisher Vance Opperman and broadcasting magnate Stanley Hubbard, will meet next week to begin planning in earnest for the convention.

National and state party officials will likely appoint a prominent local Republican to head a Twin Cities host committee.

Party workers will start negotiating details of a facility rental agreement, finding office space and making arrangements. Staff could begin to move to town in a matter of weeks.

Hotel rooms, buses, event facilities and other amenities will be reserved en masse to be parceled out to conventioners in 2008.

-- Tim Nelson

GOP CONVENTION VENUE

XCEL ENERGY CENTER

-650,000 square feet with four separate concourses and four seating levels, plus a press level.

-Exhibition halls with 75,000 and 35,000 square feet

-Ballrooms with 27,000 and 10,000 square feet

-15 meetings rooms with a total of 15,000 feet

-Seats 18,064 for NHL games

-Connects to the RiverCentre Convention Center and the Roy Wilkins Auditorium Complex (seats 5,800)

Caption: Map GOP convention venue

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Page: A9

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